



VIA Email

To: Rep. Ed McBroom, chair and members of the Oversight and Ethics Committee: Martin Howrylak, Joseph Graves, Lana Theis, Rose Mary Robinson and Kristy Pagan

From: Jane Briggs-Bunting, President, Michigan Coalition for Open Government

RE: HB 4540

Date: May 13, 2015

Dear Rep. McBroom: Please accept this faxed letter opposing the proposed changes to the state Freedom of Information law that would exempt valuable, public records on Critical Energy Infrastructure Information from public disclosure.

This legislation would continue a pattern of erosion of Michigan's citizens right to what is clearly public information directly related to the safety, health and welfare of the population.

Michigan has already experienced a near catastrophic oil spill at an Enbridge, Inc. owned pipeline. The July 2010 spill near Marshall affected 38 miles of river and 4,435 acres of adjacent shoreline habitat killing fish, natural habitat and turtles and endangering residents nearby. The oil was spilled into Talmadge Creek and the Kalamazoo River, and Enbridge now must repay the state of Michigan \$75 million in clean-up costs. Weaknesses in pipelines is an important public issue that should be available to all the state's citizens. The legislation, as proposed, would allow this vital information and relevant previously public records be hidden.

The state Freedom of Information Act, as drafted under MCL 15.243(y), already offers adequate protection without the need for further expansion in this area.

Further, this proposed legislation is unnecessary and duplicative of federal regulations that already address and deal with the potential threat of pipelines being a terrorist target.

Please share this letter and include it as part of the record for your scheduled 10:30 a.m., Thursday, May 14, 2015 hearing on this bill.

The Michigan Coalition for Open Government is a tax exempt, Michigan nonprofit corporation founded to promote and protect transparency and accountability in the governments of the people, by the people and for the people at the local, state and federal levels. Thank you.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Jane Briggs-Bunting".

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